Title: Need to upgrade the Mananthavady-Mysore link road between Kerala and Karnataka.

SHRI ABDULLAKUTTY (CANNANORE): The Mananthavady-Mysore Road is serving as a link between Kerala and Karnataka and it shortens the distance by more than 110 kilometres. This road has been in existence since the time of legendary Tipu Sultan. A stretch of 32 kilometres each on either side -- Baveli in Kerala and H.D. Kota in Karnataka—runs through Rajiv Gandhi National Park set up in recent years. But this stretch needs upgradation. This is an existing road, but our Forest Department is creating some objections. Many people from either side travel on this road including pilgrims from Karnataka visiting Tirunelli Temple on the Kerala side. Being a State highway, the PWDs in Karnataka and Kerala maintain this highway. On the Karnataka side, the development work is being undertaken with the ADB aid package.

Sir, this State highway serves as a lifeline for *Advasis* inhabiting the area on both sides. The newly announced guidelines by the Environment and Forests Ministry permit the development of forest land for public utility purposes. This State highway is of utmost utility to users of both the States, and so, it needs to be upgraded within the stretch running through the Rajiv Gandhi National Park.

Therefore, Sir, I would urge upon the Centre to accord permission to upgrade this stretch under the new guidelines permitting the development of forest land for public utility purposes.

MR. SPEAKER: Some hon. Members have given notices to raise their issues during the ‘Zero Hour’ on very important matters like natural disasters. But we are going to have a structured discussion today under rule 193 regarding Natural Calamities in the country. We will have time. So, instead of raising them now, I would request them to participate in that discussion. I would allow them to participate there. Thank you.

… (*Interruptions*)